



**CITY OF BURBANK**  
**Park, Recreation and Community Services Department**  
**STAFF REPORT**

**DATE:** June 4, 2013

**TO:** Ken Pulskamp, Interim City Manager

**FROM:** Judie Wilke, Park, Recreation and Community Services Director

**SUBJECT: APPROVE THE PROPOSED REDESIGN OF JOHNNY CARSON PARK  
AND AMEND THE FISCAL YEAR 2012-2013 BUDGET**

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**RECOMMENDATION**

Approve the proposed redesign of Johnny Carson Park and amend the Fiscal Year (FY) 2012-2013 Budget to appropriate \$525,000 from revenue account 130.ND000.30011.0000.000000, Youth Endowment Services (YES) Fund, Assigned Fund Balance to expenditure account 370.CD21A.70003.0000.20143 General City Capital Projects Fund, Johnny Carson Park Renovation Project to fund the redesign of Johnny Carson Park.

**BACKGROUND**

Johnny Carson Park is one of the largest and most utilized neighborhood parks within the City. The park was dedicated on June 16, 1943 and is approximately 17.60 acres. The park's last major renovation was completed in 1977. Several minor park improvement projects have been completed over the years such as the rehabilitation of the public parking lot (1990); the installation of new playground equipment (1993); the construction of the stage area (2003); and the rehabilitation of the public restrooms (2006). However, overall the majority of the park's infrastructure has become antiquated and requires a significant rehabilitation.

To create a more environmentally friendly and inviting park and improve the possibility of securing grant funding, staff identified several opportunities in which sustainably-driven improvements could be incorporated into the project. At the September 28, 2010 City Council meeting, staff discussed the viability of incorporating additional sustainable design options into the rehabilitation of the park. In summary, the Council supported the idea of focusing improvements on the following: energy efficiency, water efficiency, water quality, public access, and community/regional recreation uses. The Council directed staff to prepare a Request for Proposal (RFP) to select an architect to redesign the park. Following a RFP process, on March 29, 2011, the City Council awarded a contract to AHBE Landscape Architects (Architect) to proceed with the redesign of the park.

## **DISCUSSION**

Since March of 2011, staff has been working with the Architect to develop plans and specifications for the redesign of the park. As a result of several community planning workshops, AHBE has developed a conceptual design which incorporates feedback received from both the Johnny Carson Park Project Oversight Committee (Committee) and the community. Staff has prepared a more detailed analysis of the major milestones that were completed and other factors that have impacted the overall project (Exhibit A).

True to the original intent of the project, under the current design scheme the streambed will be restored and transformed into a more natural-like setting. As expressed during the community planning workshops, the streambed will also be designed in a way to prohibit the public's access to the streambed. The project will also reconfigure and expand the existing pedestrian loop trail and restore the pedestrian bridges to provide the public with better accessibility. Furthermore, an expanded destination play area which has been relocated closer to the restroom facilities and a larger stage area will also be completed as part of the project. In addition, the project includes a diverse landscape design that will minimize water consumption and utilize recycled water whenever possible. Finally, an extensive interpretive signage program coupled with two viewing platforms will be incorporated into the project to educate the community about the various environmental elements associated with this project.

On May 9, 2013, staff provided the Park, Recreation and Community Services Board (Board) with an update on the redesign of Johnny Carson Park. The Board unanimously supported the project and congratulated staff's efforts for securing just over \$2 million in grant funding.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

Partial funding for the project was approved by the Agency and Council during the FY 2007-2008, FY 2008-2009, FY 2009-2010, FY 2009-2010 and FY 2010-2011 Budget processes. During each of these years, the Agency incrementally appropriated \$500,000, yielding a total of \$2 million. Staff originally projected the project's total costs to be approximately \$2.5 million; however, as staff took a deeper look at the necessary project components, coupled with the Council's design goals, staff revised the project's budget to \$5 million. Due to the dissolution of the City's former Redevelopment Agency (Agency), the \$2 million funded by the Agency was at jeopardy of being lost. As a result, the project's budget was scaled back to \$3.7 million and the scope of this project was reduced to reflect existing funding resources.

To minimize the impact to the City's General Fund, staff has been aggressively applying for grant funding. Over the last eighteen months, staff has applied to six different grant programs (Exhibit B). In November 2012, staff learned that the City's Proposition 84, River Parkway Grant (\$1.7 million) and Land and Water Conservation Fund (\$283,630) applications were approved. Staff is currently working with the State to finalize an agreement to formally accept grant funds awarded through the Proposition 84, River Parkway Grant. Similar to other reimbursement grants, the City will have to front the cost of this grant; however, a local match is not required. On February 5, 2013, the Council accepted grant funds through the State's Land and Water Conservation program. More

recently, the Bureau of Reclamation (Bureau) has notified staff that the City's Water Conservation Field Services Grant application was ranked as one of the top projects to receive funding. Staff is eagerly waiting to hear back from the Bureau in regards to the final award amount. Staff will continue to seek alternative funding sources to further offset development costs associated with this project.

As previously noted, the project is estimated to cost approximately \$3.7 million. Year to date, the project has received just over \$2 million in grant funding. Funding has also been appropriated from the following sources: former Agency funds (\$458,000) encumbered prior to the dissolution of the Agency for design services; project savings (\$350,000) from Wildwood Canyon Road Restoration Project have been transferred to the project through the FY 2013-2014 Budget process; and funding (\$300,000) was appropriated in FY 2012-2013 to replace the playground equipment at this park. In summary, approximately \$3.2 million has been appropriated to this project via grants (\$2 million) and City funds (\$1.2 million). Based on the proposed project costs, the project currently has a budgetary shortfall of \$525,000 (Exhibit C).

To close the existing budget shortfall, staff recommends amending the FY 2012-2013 Budget by appropriating \$525,000 from revenue account 130.ND000.30011.0000.000000, YES Funds, Assigned Fund Balance to expenditure account 370.CD21A.70003.0000.20143 General City Capital Projects Fund, Johnny Carson Park Renovation Project. Due to the fact that YES Funds were considered to be Agency funds, these funds were never considered as a viable funding source for this project because they were returned to the State as part of the dissolution of the Agency. However, staff was recently notified by the State that these funds would be returned to the City and therefore, staff would like to appropriate these dollars to funding the existing project shortfall for the Johnny Carson Park project. The YES Fund was created in the early 1990's to support youth activities and projects. This funding source requires that all expenditures be made to permanent capital projects which would provide a benefit to youth. The Johnny Carson Park project is an appropriate use for YES Funds since a significant portion of the park will enhance youth related infrastructure.

## **CONCLUSION**

The purpose of this report is to provide the Council with an update on the Johnny Carson Park Project and to appropriate funding to close the project's existing budget shortfall. It is anticipated that construction activities will commence in the spring of 2014 and the project will be completed by the spring of 2015.

## **LIST OF EXHIBITS**

Exhibit A: Historical Timeline  
Exhibit B: Grant Sources Pursued  
Exhibit C: Existing Budget Shortfall